ヒトヤノヒツジ

01

story & art by

SATOSHI MIZUKAMI

TING

K-TANG

AAAAH!!

HAAAA!!

CIRCLE 1

WHACK

魂環サークル

CIRCLE

CIRCLE 1
FONE 1

水上悟志
SATOSHI MIZUKAMI

スピリット

SPIRIT

BUZZ BUZZ

UGH... WHY NOW?

SHUT...

...UP.

HAAH

YOU'RE TOUGH...

...AREN'T YOU?

HUFF

HUFF HUFF

HE—

HELLO...

HUFF HUFF

...

BEEP

I'LL WAIT.

HUFF

HUFF

WHY DON'T YOU ANS-WER?

WHAT?

THREE MONTHS EARLIER

OKEYA FUUTA 14 YEARS OLD

FUUTA.

SEPTEMBER

MY DAD SAID SECOND YEAR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS ARE UN-STOPPABLE.

HEY.

DAIKI, TETSU.

HEY.

MORN-ING.

WE HAVE NO WORRIES.

WHERE'D YOU HEAR THAT?

THERE'S A TRANSFER STUDENT COMING TODAY.

YOU GUYS ARE CLOSE.

AZUMA-SENSEI.

I HOPE HE'S SHORTER THAN ME.

WE'RE CARE-FREE.

I WONDER IF HE'S STRONG.

I WONDER IF HE'S SMART.

ISHIGAMI KOUKO

I'M ISHIGAMI KOUKO.

NICE TO MEET YOU.

ISHIGAMI KOUKO

ペコリ

BOW

ISHI-GAMI-SAN...

I'VE PREPARED A SEAT FOR YOU IN THE BACK.

... EVERY-ONE WAS STUNNED SILENT.

FOR A MOM-ENT...

BUT...

FOR ME, THE WAY SHE BRAZENLY SHOWED IT OFF LIKE A MEDAL

THEY WERE SHOCKED BY THE WAY SHE MADE NO EFFORT TO HIDE THE SCAR ON HER FOREHEAD.

I THOUGHT SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL.

I FELL IN LOVE.

HEH, HEH.

MY NAME'S OKEYA FUUTA.

NICE TO MEET YOU.

UH, UMI

WHAT SHOCKED ME SOON THERE-AFTER...

...WAS HER VICIOUS TONGUE ...

WHAT A DULL NAME.

GIGGLE

...AND THE MYSTERIOUS GIANT THAT SUDDENLY APPEARED BEHIND HER.

MY NAME IS EAST.

NICE TO MEET YOU.

HE'S A GHOST!

FWOOSH

=,
SMILE

WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES? DO YOU READ MANGA?

WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

UM...

I SOMETIMES READ MANGA, AND I GUESS MOBILE GAMES ARE MY HOBBY.

I'M FROM TOKYO.

NICE TO MEET YOU.

CALL ME UMI.

UMI-SHIMA MIZUNO.

OH, SORRY. I'M NONO-MURA MIYABI.

CALL ME NONO.

THE TRANSFER STUDENT'S A GIRL. BORING.

NOTH-ING.

HA HA HA.

WHAT?

HER GHOST WAS A LOOKER, TOO

IN FACT, SHE'S BEAU-TIFUL.

BUT SHE'S CUTE..

JUST A JOKE.

MUST BE SOME KIND OF JOKE.

I DON'T BELIEVE YOU

FUUTA, DID YOU SEE SOMETHING AGAIN?

WHOA, THERE HE IS AGAIN.

MY EYES ARE NO JOKE.

...TO ME.

IT'S A PRIVILEGE OF MIDDLE SCHOOL SECOND YEARS!

FUUTA, ACCEPT YOUR EYES, AND THEIR ABILITY TO SEE GHOSTS!

MY DAD SAID...

I'M SCARED OF GHOSTS.

BESIDES, I DON'T WANT TO SEE THEM.

NO WAY, NO HOW.

HE SEEMS TO HAVE SOME KIND OF F XATION ON THE SECOND YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL.

DON'T COVET YOUR OWN SON'S EYE-BALLS.

I SUPER DUPER WANT THEM.

IF YOU DON'T WANT THEM, GIVE THEM TO ME

I'M NOT TALL.

ABSO-LUTELY NOT.

SECOND YEARS ARE UNSTOP-PABLE?

YEAH, RIGHT. I'VE GOT WORRIES.

FORTUNA.

RUNE.

WE'LL BE LATE TO THE FESTIVAL.

WHAT'S WRONG, YOU TWO?

I'M HERE.

WE'RE COMING.

YEAH

LET'S GO, MASTER.

YEAH.

SINCE THEN

SINCE THEN, A LOT OF TIME HAS PASSED, BUT...

YEAH.

THIS TIME WAS THE MOST...

I HAD A WEIRD DREAM

URGH

AND I JUST DREAMED THAT WE WERE WALKING ALONG TOGETHER...

MY NAME WAS FOR-SOMETHING, AND THERE WERE A BUNCH OF STRANGERS.

WHAT IS THIS?

WHOOPS.

DRIP DROP

HUH?

AND UNBEAR ABLE SORROW

DRIP

...BUT I FELT A GREAT SENSE OF HAPPI-NESS ..

IS SOME-THING WRONG?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME.

NO.

SNIFFLE

I'M STILL IN CLASS

IT WON'T STOP

SHE WAS A LITTLE KID, THOUGH.

ISHI-GAMI-SAN? SHE WAS IN MY DREAM.

..THIS TRANS-FER STUD-ENT

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT

...

...I THOUGHT I HAD TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF THIS GIRL.

IN THE DREAM

. .

I'M GOING TO BE FRIENDS WITH THIS GIRL.

OKAY! I'VE DECI-DED

WUMPH

I FEEL SO INSPI-RED!!

WHAT IS THIS?

WHAAAAT?

OH?

DING

SECOND YEARS ARE UNSTOPP-ABLE!!

WHO CARES ABOUT HER HANDSOME GHOST?!

...

RUB RUB

RUB RUB

I CAN DO IT!!

HEE HEE HEE.

GROSS...

GLORP

BYE.

LATER.

キーン DING DONG カーン DING コーン

DON'T BE DISHEART-ENED.

WANT TO JOIN THE JUDO CLUB?

WANT TO RUN TRACK?

HEY.

HEY, ISHI-GAMI ...

ANY INTEREST IN THE HISTORY CLUB?

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE ART CLUB?

THE ART CLUB...

WE STUDY AND RESEARCH HISTORY.

WHAT'S THE HISTORY CLUB?

...

FUUTA, THE ART CLUB DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH PEOPLE.

WHAT? WHAT? WHAT? WHAT? WHAT? WHAT?

I THOUGHT FOR SURE SHE'D BE THE ATHLETIC TYPE.

WHAT?

ME, TOO.

PLEASE DO!

I'LL CHECK IT OUT.

MAYBE
..

...IT'S LOVE.

WHAT AM I SAYING?

NOT THAT I ACTUALLY SAID IT

JEEZ

IT'S HIM. UM... EAST.

OH.

BUT THINKING OF HER GIVES ME STRENGTH.

DON'T WAVE AT ME, GHOST.

..AND IT'S HER.

HE WAS IN MY DREAM, TOO.

SHE LOOKED THIS WAY.

HUH?

SHE'S COM-ING.

OH.

OR...

CAN SHE SEE EAST, TOO?

THE TIMING WAS TOO PERFECT.

THE HISTORY CLUB FINISHED EARLIER THAN I EXPECTED SO I'M *GOING* FOR A WALK.

NO.

ER.

H-HEY.

DO YOU LIVE THIS WAY?

I DON'T KNOW THIS AREA YET.

ACTUALLY, I'M EXPLORING

I'M DONE FOR TODAY.

NO, THANK YOU.

I'VE LIVED HERE FOREVER!!

OH, I'LL SHOW YOU AROUND!!

I PREFER TO BE ALONE.

THEN TOMOR-ROW...

IF SHE CAN'T SEE HIM, THAT'D BE WAY TOO CREEPY.

I GUESS IT'S CREEPY EVEN IF SHE CAN.

PEEK

I CAN TALK ABOUT HER GHOST.. OR MAYBE NOT.

STEAM

AUGH, THINK OF SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT...!!

UH..

UM...

WHAT ABOUT THE ART CLUB?

I'M NOT INTER-ESTED

I DON'T KNOW

A-ARE YOU JOIN-ING..

THE HISTORY CLUB?

OKAY

..OH

I'M NOT JOINING THE JUDO CLUB...

...OR TRACK TEAM EITHER.

THEY INVITED ME, BUT...

EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT IN THE SAME CLUB, I HOPE YOU'LL BE FRIENDS WITH THEM!!

B-BUT, YOU KNOW...

THEY'RE GOOD GUYS!!

ON WEEKENDS HE TRAINS IN MARTIAL ARTS, AND HE'S REALLY STRONG.

HUH?

HE'S GOT EYES LIKE THIS, BUT HE LIKES ANIMALS, AND HE'S A GOOD GUY

THE GUY WHO INVITED YOU TO THE TRACK TEAM IS TETSU, MASHIRO TETSUMA!!

UM!

UH!

SHE'S THE VICE-CAPTAIN OF THE JUDO CLUB!!

SHE'S ACTUALLY REALLY ATHLETIC, THOUGH

SHE'S *GOT* GLASSES AND SHE'S A MIDGET LIKE ME.

THE GIRL FROM THE JUDO CLUB'S UMI, UMISHIMA MIZUNO.

THEY'RE POLAR OPPOSITES. NONO'S TERRIBLE AT SPORTS

SHE'S EVEN BETTER THAN ME AT DRAWING BUT ONLY A LITTLE.

SHE'S FRIENDS WITH UMI.

THE TALL GIRL IN THE ART CLUB WITH ME IS NONO, NONOMURA MIYABI

HE'S SMART AND ALWAYS PLACES IN THE TOP THREE OF THE CLASS

HE GETS ALONG WELL WITH THE TEACHER, TOO.

THE GUY IN THE HISTORY CLUB'S DAIKI, TAKAYAMA DAIKI. YOU CAN TELL HE'S A NICE GUY JUST FROM TALKING TO HIM, RIGHT?

UM

AND, UH, WHAT WAS I *GOING* TO SAY?

THEY'RE ALL NICE PEOPLE, *SO*

COUNTING ME, THE FIVE OF US HAVE BEEN IN THE SAME CLASS SINCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND WE'RE *GOOD* FRIENDS

SHE LAU-GHED!

DID SHE LAUGH?

PFT!

YOU SEEM LIKE A NICE PERSON, TOO, OKEYA-KUN..

GIGGLE

GIGGLE

..TO MAKE ME LIKE YOUR FRIENDS?

YOU DON'T NEED TO TRY SO HARD...

..SINCE YOU CAN DEFEND YOUR FRIENDS SO FERVENTLY

SHE'S NOT JUST PRETTY, SHE'S CUTE, TOO!

WHOA.

WHA–

UM!

I–

HUH?

...BUT I GUESS YOU'RE NOT HIM

YOU LOOK LIKE SOMEONE I HATE.

I'M SORRY

S- SURE.

LATER.

I'M GOING HOME.

TALK TO YOU TOMOR- ROW.

SURE...

YEAH.

FARE-WELL.

UM!

NOTH-ING..

SHIT. I RESPONDED TO HER GHOST.

...

..WHAT?

...JUST NOW?

DID YOU RESPOND TO EAST...

TUP

CAN YOU SEE HIM?

WHY?
TH-THIS THING?
BUT, UM
WHAT?!
THAT THING ON YOUR CHEEK.
TAKE IT OFF.
UH, UMI
HEY...
THAT...
TUP
TUP
TUP
...
STARE
PEEL
I THINK WAY YOU SHOW OFF THAT THING ON YOUR FOREHEAD IS PRETTY COOL.
IT'S A BIRTH-MARK.
IT STANDS OUT, SO I KEEP IT HIDDEN.
..GET THAT?
WHEN DID YOU..
GULP

GRAB

WHAT?

WAIT.

WHAT ... ...IS THAT?

YOU'RE THE ONE I HATE.

I WASN'T WRONG.

WHAT?!

WHERE WERE YOU KEEPING...

δ′

ɔ

2

III

ROAR

THAT'S WHY I DON'T HIDE IT.

THIS SCAR IS PROOF OF WHO I AM. IT IS MY PRIDE.

...THAT THING?

YOU'RE RIGHT TO HIDE IT IN SHAME.

YOURS IS A CURSED BRAND.

I—

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...

WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER A LONG TIME.

NO.

BESIDES, I THOUGHT WE JUST MET—

WH-WHAT ARE YOU SAY-ING?

...IN REINCAR-NATION?

DO YOU BELIEVE...

REIN-CAR—

?

WHAT?

ARE YOU CRAZY?!

WHAAAAT?!

ARE...

ARE YOU?!

1

2

3

N

CRACK

WHAT'S GOING—

SHIT.

THUD

THUD

THUD

THUD

THUD

THUD

THUD

THUD

THUD

THERE ARE...

. STAIRS

.. HIT

WHY DID SHE...

UHI

UGHI

OW.

THAT HURT.

FONE!

DID YOU FALL OUT OF A TREE WHILE NAPPING AGAIN?

PHEW

WERE YOU DREAM-ING?

YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL.

HUH?

OH, REI.

POP

FONE.

POP POP

FONE.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO DREAM, DREAM ABOUT ME.

YOU WHAT?

I DREAMED ABOUT GETTING HIT BY A GIRL IN SOME STRANGE COUNTRY.

WILL YOU COME BACK?

ARE YOU LEAV-ING?

ARE YOU OKAY? ARE YOU HURT?

FONE FELL.

POP

FONE.

POP

WHAT'S GOING ON, FONE?

I'M FINE.

YEAH ... I'LL COME BACK.

POP

ARE YOU TALKING TO THE FOREST SPIRITS AGAIN?

POP

FONE.

FONE!

POP

YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN BORN AN ORACLE.

NO.

WELL...

YEAH

WHAT?

THAT'S NOT TRUE.

THE CERE-MONIES ARE POINT-LESS.

I KNOW BECAUSE I CAN HEAR THE VOICES OF THE FOREST.

IT'S THE OPPO-SITE.

I'M GLAD I'M NOT AN ORACLE.

WE JUST HAVE TO CHERISH LIFE

WHEN WE DIE, NOTHING HAPPENS.

THERE'S NO MAGIC OR MIRACLES.

THE SPIRITS ALWAYS SING THE PRAISES OF LIFE.

DAD.

REI.

HEY!

YOU'VE BEEN CHOSEN FOR THIS YEAR'S SACRIFICE!!

IT'S AMAZING, REI!! WE'RE HONORED!!

"FONE"

CHAPTER 2

CIRCLE 1/ FIN

スピリットサークル 魂環

SPIRIT CIRCLE

FUUTA

CIRCLE 2
FONE 2

...I COULD SEE THE FOREST SPIRITS.

EVER SINCE I WAS LITTLE...

I SHOULD MAKE ESPECIALLY SURE THE ORACLES NEVER FOUND OUT.

MY PARENTS TOLD ME TO KEEP IT SECRET.

THE VILLAGERS BELIEVED ONLY THOSE CARRYING THEIR BLOOD COULD USE MAGIC.

THE ORACLES ARE A POWERFUL FAMILY THAT KEEP THE VILLAGE SAFE USING MAGICAL CEREMONIES.

...THEY'D PROBABLY KILL ME.

IF THEY FOUND OUT ABOUT MY ABILITY...

RUSTLE

WHO'S THERE...?

AFTER ALL, THE ONLY ONES BESIDES THE ORACLES THAT CAN USE MAGIC.

HA HA HA...

HUH?

IS IT...

DE-MONS?

WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO?

...ARE DEMONS.

WAIT!

AH!

DASH

WHAT?!
SHE'S COMING BACK?!
DASH
SPIN
GRAB
WHUD
W-WAIT!!
LOOK CLOSE-LY!!
WHOA!
WHOOSH
YA-AAHI
TAKE THIS, DEMON!
I'M FRIEU THE SHOEMAKER'S KID, FONE!
I'M HUMAN!
HOLD ON.
?
...
THESE?
OHH
WAS SHE TRYING TO KILL A DEMON WITH A STICK?
SHE HAS A FEVER.
I'M GATHER-ING HERBS FOR MY MOTHER.
THEN YOU'RE A HUMAN.
FRIEU? HE'S MY DAD'S FRIEND...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT IN THE FOREST?
SIGH

...

?

I DON'T KNOW EITHER.

WHAT ARE THESE?

HAVE HER TAKE THESE BERRIES, TOO.

THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE TELLING ME

THEY SAY, "IF YOU'RE GIVING THOSE TO HER MOTHER, GIVE HER THESE BERRIES."

SHE'LL GET BETTER SOON!

SEE, THE FOREST SPIRITS?

THEY'RE YUMMY

THEY WORK!

I WILL. IT'S A SECRET

SURE

WILL YOU KEEP IT A SECRET?

BUT IN EX-CHANGE..

HUH?

I'M NOT A DEMON OR AN ORACLE, THOUGH

YEAH, I GUESS

.. YOU WERE TALKING TO THE SPIRITS?

. YOU CAN SEE THEM?

MY NAME'S REI.

CAN I SEE YOU AGAIN?

IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

OH.

OKAY

WE QUICKLY BECAME LOVERS.

THANK YOU!

MY MOM'S FEVER WENT DOWN *OVERNIGHT!*

IT'S AMAZ-ING!

I-

I DIDN'T DO ANY-THING

..OUR DAYS.

FOR TWO YEARS AFTER THAT

..WERE SPENT HAPPILY TOGETHER

HOW-EVER,

SHE WAS CHOSEN TO BE THEIR SACRI-FICE.

ONCE EVERY EIGHT YEARS, A CEREMONY IS HELD TO PROTECT THE COUNTRY.

AND SO WE SHALL RECEIVE THE BLESSING OF THE WIND AND EARTH GODS!!

PRAISE BE TO THE HOLY ONE CHOSEN BY THE GODS!

CHOSEN BY THE WIND GODS, WE OFFER THIS GIRL'S BLOOD TO THE EARTH GODS!!

I DON'T WANT THAT

LUCKY US.

GREAT NEWS, FONE.

LET US HONOR THE HOLY ONE'S HOUSE AND HER LOVER'S HOUSE!!

UNTIL THEN, LET US SEND OFF THE HOLY ONE WITH A CELEBRATION!!

HUZZAH!

THE CERE-MONY WILL BE HELD IN THREE DAYS!!

HOLY ONE!!

WOOO

WAAHH

OH! SHE LOOKED THIS WAY!

SHE'S BEAU-TI-FUL

HOLY ONE!!

HEE HEE! THEY'RE CALLING ME "THE HOLY ONE."

...I'M SORRY WE CAN'T GET MARRIED.

...

FONE.

I HOPE YOU'LL BECOME A GREAT SHOE-MAKER.

MY BLOOD WILL PROTECT THE VILLAGE FOREVER.

YOU'RE TOO VALU-ABLE.

A CRAFTS-MAN'S CHILD CAN'T BECOME A WARRIOR.

NOT THE ORACLES OR THE HOLY ONES.

...I ACTUALLY WANTED TO BECOME A WARRIOR.

ONLY WARRIORS HAVE THE STRENGTH TO PROTECT

BIRTH AND DEATH SHOULD BE LEFT TO FATE.

THE CEREMONIES AREN'T CAUSING ANY MIRACLES.

THE SPIRITS ARE TELLING ME.

THE EARTH DOESN'T WANT BLOOD.

EVERYONE'S WORRIED ABOUT POOR HARVESTS...

...AND ILLNESS.

FONE..

WHAT THE VILLAGERS NEED NOW IS A HOLY ONE

YOU SAID SACRI-FICE!

JUST NOW!

SACRI-FICE.

WILL EASE EVERY-ONE'S MINDS.

IF MY SACRI-FICE...

TELL ME YOU DON'T WANT TO DIE!!

IF YOU DO, I...

GRAB

FOR ME...

...AS LONG AS I HAVE YOU, I DON'T NEED ANYTHING ELSE!!

LET'S RUN AWAY TOGETHER!! LET'S ABANDON THE VILLAGE!!

YOU DON'T ACTUALLY LIKE IT, DO YOU?

I'M ALREADY... HAPPY ENOUGH WITH THIS HONOR.

COME ON

...I HOPE YOU'LL BE HAPPY, FONE.

I...

...

SEND ME OFF WITH A SMILE!

SO COME ON!

I'M SURE ONE DAY YOU'LL MEET SOMEONE EVEN BETTER!

A WAR-RIOR.

THEN I COULD PROTECT WHAT I CHER-ISHED

I WANTED TO BE A WAR-RIOR...

A WAR-RIOR..

FONE

FONE

FONE.

CHEER UP

I, STONA, DAUGHTER OF ORACLE SALVE, WILL OVERSEE THE RITUAL!!

THE SACRIFICIAL CEREMONY WILL NOW BEGIN!!

...LET US SIT QUIETLY AND SEE HER OFF!

.. VILLA-GERS..

AS THE HOLY ONE RESTING IN THE PEACE GRANTED BY THE WATER OF SLEEP DEPARTS...

MURMUR

A WARRIOR.

MURMUR

MURMUR

WHAT?

THE SHOE-MAKER'S SON.

SIT DOWN

HEY.

MURMUR

WHO IS THAT?

TAK

TAK

TAK

MURMUR

HUH?

HEY!

DASH

GLEAM

MOVE!

!!

REAL WAR-RIORS ...!!

STAND BACK!!

STOP!!

DON'T INTERFERE WITH THE CEREMONY!!

!!

SWISH

WHOA!

REI!!

REI!!

I'LL PRO-TECT REI!!

I'LL RES-CUE REI!!

!!

STEP

THUD

SHUFF

I WILL.

I WILL.

R
E
I
!!

BA-DUM
ドゥン
BA-DUM
ドゥン

SHLUP

AIII-

...WILL PUNISH HE WHO INTERFERES WITH THE RITUAL!!

I, STONA, MARSHAL OF THIS EVENT...

SHOOM

THIS IS...

...MY REI.

...THE ORACLE WHO KILLED ...

AHH!!

THIS FACE.

I'VE SEEN IT—

IT CAN'T BE.

HUH?

WHAT?

CLANG

AA-

WA

FONE..

FONE.

FONE...

FONE!

IN YOUR NEXT LIFE

DON'T BE AFRAID

...HATE WILL...

DON'T BE ANGRY

NO.

DAMN!! DAMN!!

DAMN!! WHY?!

DAMN!! DAMN!!

I DIED?

IM-POSS-IBLE.

-AA

AH!

MY HEAD!!

IT'S STILL THERE.

MY HEAD . .

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

MY HEAD!!

HUFF

HUFF

MY HEAD!!

I DIED!!

I DIED!!

I'M ALIVE!

I'M ALIVE.

OKEYA FUUTA-KUN.

I'M GLAD YOU'RE ALIVE.

DID YOU HAVE A NICE DREAM?

YOU'RE IN THE HOS-PITAL.

I CALLED AN AMBU-LANCE.

YOU...

...SLIPPED ON THE STAIRS IN THE PARK AND FELL.

DREAM ?

...A DREAM ...

OH, THE HOS-PITAL...

HOS-PITAL?

THAT'S ME?

OKEYA. FUUTA

...STO-NA?

YES.

THAT'S ME.

. . .

. THE ORA-CLE...

ISHI-GAMI...

TRYING TO PLAY THE VICTIM?

YOU COWARD.

THAT'S THE PAST LIFE YOU REMEMBERED FIRST?

I'LL HAVE YOU...

...DIE SEVEN MORE TIMES.

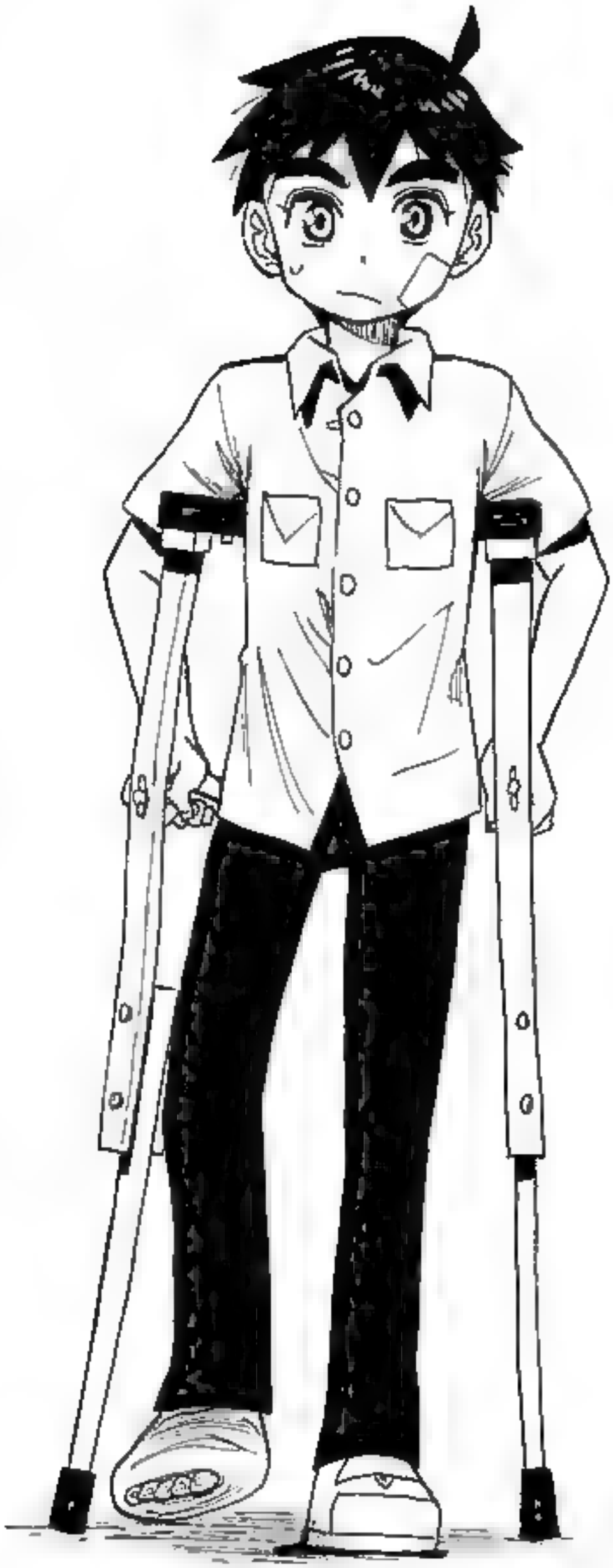
CIRCLE 2/ FIN

スピリットサークル 魂環

SPIRIT CIRCLE

KOUKO
つ-つ

CIRCLE 3
FONE 3



TRYING TO PLAY THE VICTIM?

YOU COWARD.

THAT'S THE PAST LIFE YOU REMEMBERED FIRST?

WHAT?

ISHI-GAMI ...

...DIE SEVEN MORE TIMES.

I'LL HAVE YOU...

WHAT ARE YOU...

JOLT

FUUTA.

WAAAH.

I'M ALIVE.

NO-NO.

A-ARE.

ARE YOU ALIVE?

I HEARD YOU FELL DOWN THE STAIRS IN THE PARK.

NONO'S DAD WORKS AT THIS HOSPITAL, AND HER HOUSE IS NEARBY SHE CAME RIGHT AWAY WHEN SHE GOT A CALL FROM HER DAD.

I SEE...

...

MY DAD'S THE HOSPITAL AND THE PHONE SO I CAME FROM MY HOME OUT BACK.

UM... NONO-MURA-SAN

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE..

THANKS.

OKAY

WE CALLED YOUR PLACE RIGHT AWAY. YOUR DAD SAID HE'D COME GET YOU.

!

...FOR CALLING AN AMBULANCE FOR FUUTA.

AND THANK YOU, ISHIGAMI-SAN..

...

WAAAHH!

IF HE DIED...

IF FUUTA HAD DIED...

IF I DIED...?

DIE...?

THAT DREAM

...

HUH?

...

I'LL HAVE YOU DIE SEVEN MORE TIMES...

AH!

WUMPH

MY LEG'S BROKEN?!

IT'S SPRA-INED A SPRAIN.

I THOUGHT IT WAS BROKEN, TOO, ACTU-ALLY

IT'S NOT BROKEN

OH, WELL.

IT'S BROKEN.

IS IT BROKEN?

I COULD SHOULDER THROW-

WHY?!

MAYBE BENDING IT THE OTHER WAY WILL FIX...

NO, IT WON'T!!

SHOULD I CARRY YOU LIKE A PRINCESS?

EW, NO.

DO YOU WANT ME TO CARRY YOU ON MY SHOULDERS?

YOU'RE TOO TALL.

YOU HAVE SUCH LOVELY FRIENDS.

YEAH.

RUSTLE

AFTER SCHOOL ON THE ROOF

TMP

WHAT ..?

Oo

JUMP
?!
UP HERE.
SLAM
...
I'M SURE SHE WON'T PUSH ME OFF THE ROOF...
WHY ARE YOU UP THERE?
WHAT?
I'LL KILL YOU EITHER WAY, THOUGH
WHOOSH
I CAN SEE YOUR UNDER-WEAR.
GO AHEAD AND LOOK. I'LL KILL YOU.
I LIKE...
...HIGH PLACES.

GYM SHORTS..

FLUTTER

I

ABOUT YESTER-DAY...

DO YOU...

HUH?

OH, THAT DREAM I HAD...

THAT'S RIGHT.

WAS THAT A PAST LIFE?

WAS..

THAT'S THE PAST LIFE YOU REMEMBERED FIRST?

DO YOU BELIEVE IN REINCAR-NATION?

I'M THE ORACLE STONA.

IT'S BEEN A WHILE.

THEN...

AM I... FONE?

!

KOUKO IS KOUKO.

YOU ARE OKEYA FUUTA.

...

SERI-OUS-LY...?

...

STAY OUT OF THIS, EAST.

I HAVE A MESSAGE FOR FONE FROM REI.

...

I DON'T KNOW. ANY-WAY...

...WHERE AND WHEN WAS THAT PLACE?

I'LL WALK TO HEAVEN IN YOUR SANDALS.

I LOVE YOU.

...BUT SHE INSISTED ON THE SANDALS SHE BROUGHT.

THERE'S A DESIGNATED OUTFIT FOR THE RITUAL OF SACRIFICE...

I MADE THOSE..

I...

YES

...

HUH?

I'M SORRY IT TOOK SO LONG..

MUTTER

...I FULFILLED MY PROMISE, REI...

CRACKLE

..COMES MY BUSI-NESS.

NEXT..

YESTER-DAY. !!

...!! THAT THING!

SPIRIT CIRCLE.

ROAR

CIRCLE

SPIRIT

I WILL HAVE YOU EXPERIENCE AT LEAST SIX MORE PAST LIVES...

...IN WHICH YOU AND I WERE CONNECTED.

THE LIFE OF FONE YOU SAW...

...IS ONE OF SEVERAL PAST LIVES.

WHY?!

YEAH, BUT

THEN, I WILL KILL YOU.

WHY?

BUT

THAT IS WHAT THIS WEAPON IS FOR.

SWISH...

MY GOAL IS TO KILL YOUR SOUL AND END THE CYCLE ...!!

YOU WILL REMEMBER EVENTUALLY. WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER A LONG TIME.

THIS IS A DECLA-RATION OF WAR!!

THIS IS THE 10 THOU-SANDTH YEAR WE'VE MET!!

WHOOSH

...I WILL END OUR BATTLE!!

IN THIS LIFE-TIME...

SWISH

...BUT ISN'T IT ALL IN THE PAST?!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAP-PENED ...

I DON'T UNDER-STAND!!

...!

I'M ME, TOO ...!!

BUT I'M...

I THINK HE WAS ME, BUT...

FONE WAS... PRO- BABLY... ME...

I WANT TO BE FRIENDS WITH YOU!!

I MET YOU FOR THE FIRST TIME YESTERDAY!!

UM.

...

HUH?!

WHY?

I...

I...

URGH

YOU MENTIONED THE PAST.

DID YOU FORGET I PUSHED YOU DOWN THE STAIRS YESTERDAY?

LOOK AT HOW BADLY I HURT YOU

BESIDES, YOU NEVER PUSHED ME!

HMPH

I'M NOT INJURED!!

IT DOESN'T EVEN HURT!!

CLATTER

CLATTER

...

IT DOESN'T HURT!!

IT DOESN'T HURT!!

IT...

AAARGH!

THANKS.

I HEARD YOU TOOK FUUTA TO THE HOSPITAL YESTERDAY

HEY, TRANS-FER.

EVERYONE WAS WORRIED

THANKS FOR HELPING FUUTA

HE'S KIND OF SLOW

THANKS FOR SAVING FUUTA YESTER-DAY.

AAARGH

ROLL

ROLL

ROLL

...

I SAID WHAT I WANTED TO SAY

I'M LEAVING.

YOU'RE RIGHT

HE'S KINDA COOL, ISN'T HE?

WAIT..

ISHI-GAMI..

AH.

TAK

...REI'S MESS-AGE.

THANKS FOR DELIV-ERING...

SLAM

I DIDN'T DO IT FOR YOU.

...

SMILE

THE ORACLE.

BUT I STILL HAVEN'T FORGIVEN HER.

SHUT UP.

THANKS FOR THE FOOD.

WELL, I HOPE IT'S THE REINCARNATION OF YOUR GRANDMOTHER.

YOU'RE SO SILLY.

YOU SOUND LIKE YOUR FATHER.

...IF HE STARTS ASKING WHERE AND WHO HE WAS BEFORE...

MOM,

WHEN THAT BABY'S BORN...

I'M SO EXCITED.

THAT'D BE A GOOD THING?

MAYBE I'LL CHECK OUT ONE OF DAD'S BOOKS...

CAN PEOPLE BE REINCAR-NATED THAT MANY TIMES?

AT LEAST SIX MORE...

JUST HOW MUCH DOES SHE HATE ME?

MY GOAL IS TO KILL YOUR SOUL AND END THE CYCLE!!

I MUST HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH HIM IN A DIFFERENT LIFE...

EAST... ...EAST WASN'T IN FONE'S PAST.

...COULD IT... ALL BE TRUE ...?

I HAVE A MESSAGE FOR FONE FROM REI.

THAT WAS PROBABLY ONE OF MY PAST LIVES, TOO...

THE SCENE FROM THAT DREAM...

I THINK IT WAS.

AND ONE MORE. WHO WAS SHE?

ME.

ISHIGAMI-SAN.

EAST.

"RUNE"...

...

I'M HERE!!

GLOMP

WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?!

MAS-

TER!

WHAAAT?!

MAS-TER!!

I'VE MISSED YOU...

YOU CALLED, AND I CAME!! I AM YOUR RUNE!!

WAIT...

WAIT!

WHAT?

THIS IS...

PRAISE ME!!

KEEEE

EEE

I HAVE THAT THING YOU ASKED ME TO HOLD ONTO HERE!!

A S-
SPIRIT
CIRCLE?!

II

CIRCLE 3/ FIN

スピリットサークル 魂環
SPIRIT CIRCLE

RUNE

CIRCLE 4
SPIRIT CIRCLE

II

SPIRIT CIRCLE ...!!

A....

II

UM, WHO ARE YOU?

AND

1

FLINCH

WHAT?!

OH!

"RUNE"

I CALLED YOU?

AM I YOUR MASTER?

I'M RUNE, MASTER!!

THAT'S RIGHT!!

I'M THE ONE WHO WANTS TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON!

YOU TOLD ME TO WAIT UNTIL YOU CALLED ME, AND I'VE BEEN WAITING FOREVER.

SOB SOB SOB SOB SOB

OH.

IT'S DAD.

WEL-COME HOME, DEAR.

I'M HOME!

ガチャッ KA-CHAK

バタン SLAM

NICE TO MEET YOU! THE NAME'S RUNE!!

AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE?

I GOT A STUFFED ANIMAL AT THE GAME CENTER

DO YOU WANT IT?

I'M HOME, FUUTA.

KA-CHAK

OKAY, THEN

BYE.

HMPH.

I...

I DON'T WANT IT

...

WHEW

THAT STAR-TLED ME.

HE CAN'T SEE ME

OH, RIGHT.

SLAM

WHA—

WHAT?!

BAM

EEP!

FUUTA.

AND DON'T JUST OPEN THE DOOR!! MY PRIVACY IS... WELL, YOU KNOW!!

THERE'S NOTHING HERE! JUST LEAVE ALREADY!!

HELLO!! HELLO!!

HUH?! HE CAN SEE ME ?

...SOME-THING HERE?

IS THERE .

DON'T GO GIVING MY SPECIAL ABILITY SOME WEIRD NAME!!

NEXT TIME YOU SEE SOMETHING WITH YOUR GHOST SIGHT, LET ME KNOW

CREAK

OH... I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT HAVE BROUGHT HOME THE ARMORED WARRIOR PEOPLE AT THE APARTMENT COMPLEX ARE TALKING ABOUT

I CAN'T HANDLE LISTENING TO MY PARENTS MAKE FUN OF MY AGE.

HE CAN'T SEE ME AFTER ALL.

HUH?

MY, HE'S GROWN. SHALL WE CELEBRATE?

MOM, OUR SON'S OLD ENOUGH TO YELL AT ME ABOUT HIS PRIVACY.

WHERE AND WHEN ARE WE?

WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON?

...FOR-TUNA?

UM IS YOUR MASTER..

YES?

WHA?!

LEAN

SO...

MASTER?

WHY ARE THEY CALLING YOU FUUTA?

THAT'S RIGHT FORTUNA-SAMA.

SORRY, BUT.. I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING BESIDES MY NAME.

CURRENTLY I'M OKEYA FUUTA.

FORTUNA'S PROBABLY ONE OF MY PAST LIVES..

.. WHAT'S GOING ON, TOO.

FRANKLY, I'D LIKE TO KNOW ..

YOU SAID YOU'D BEEN HOLDING ONTO IT

WHAT DID FORTUNA PLAN TO DO ?

..AND WHAT IS THIS THING, ANYWAY?

WHAT?

ナンパ

SLUMP

II

ROAR

.. MADE THIS. ?

I...

WHO KNOWS ?

I ONLY KNOW YOU MADE IT.

SIGH

ROAR

ROAR

MAYBE THEY'RE ALL THE NUMBER TWO ..

HUH?

ROAR

THE SYMBOL'S CHANGING...

ROAR

?

...THE THING ITSELF SEEMS LIKE A GHOST.

WHOOSH

..CAN SUMMON AND DISMISS IT FREELY

I...

FWISH

WHAT DO I DO NOW?

SO, UM...

WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

ISHIGAMI-SAN'S HAD A DIFFERENT NUMBER OF LIGHTS...

BUT ...!!

SORRY FOR CALLING YOU WHEN I DIDN'T NEED ANYTHING.

OH, RIGHT

YOU CAN LEAVE NOW

PLEASE LET ME STAY WITH YOU AGAIN.

AN APOLOGY DOESN'T HELP ME.

LEAN

MY ONLY PLACE IS BY YOUR SIDE.

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

NOW I'VE GOT MY OWN GHOST...

AND I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO LOOK...

SURE, I GUESS.

UM.. FINE.

ALL THE KIDS ARE WEARING THE SAME CLOTHES!

MASTER, MASTER!!

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

SHE'S AN AWFULLY CHEERFUL GHOST, THOUGH.

SHE DOESN'T UNDER-STAND?

IT'S LOVELY!!

A SCHOOL?! NEAT!

NOT THAT I UNDER-STAND

IT'S A SCHOOL

KEEP QUIET.

HUH?!

I WONDER IF SHE'LL GO TO HEAVEN EVENTUALLY.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH HER?

WHAT?

OH.

I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

HEY, RUNE.

IT'S NICE TO SEE YOU!!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!

OH!! EAST-SAN!!

G-GOOD MORNING, ISHIGAMI-SAN...

WHAT?

IT [S] GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN!!

THEN IS THIS GIRL... KOKO-CHAN?!

RUNE...

KOKO WAS FOND OF YOU, RUNE.

WHOA!

ARE YOU OKAY?

WHAT'S WRONG?

JUST MY NAME ...

I SEE

UM, WELL. NOTH-ING

HOW MUCH HAVE YOU REMEM-BERED?

BUT ISN'T SHE STILL KOUKO ..?

UM... IS "KOKO" ISHIGAMI-SAN'S NAME FROM A PAST LIFE...?

DON'T DO ANYTHING NAUGHTY.

RUNE'S A SPECIAL GHOST YOU CAN TOUCH IF YOU SEE FIT.

I—

I WON'T, I WON'T!!

SHAKE SHAKE SHAKE

NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, SHE PUSHED ME DOWN WHEN SHE APPEARED

WHAT?!

SWIMMING IS SO GREAT!!

KOKO-CHAN!!

SMILE

FLUMP

I WASN'T...

WHAT?

ISHIGAMI-SAN WAS LOOKING AT YOU, TOO.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?

HAVEN'T UMI'S BREASTS GOTTEN BIGGER?

NONO'S GOT LONG LEGS.

?

ISHIGAMI-SAN'S HIPS ARE SO SLENDER.

WHAT WAS OUR RELATION-SHIP?

.. THE FOUR OF US.

I'M GLAD THE FOUR OF US ARE TOGETHER AGAIN.

I'M GLAD EAST-SAN AND KOKO-CHAN SEEM TO BE DOING WELL.

MASTER, WHERE ARE WE GOING NEXT?

I SEE!

HOME.

WHAT WAS I LIKE...

APPRENTICE IN WHAT? WHAT AM I A MASTER OF, ANYWAY?

KOKO-CHAN IS EAST-SAN'S DAUGHTER.

MASTER AND APPRENTICE

FRIEND

PARENT AND CHILD

MASTER

YOU'RE MY MASTER.

..AND EAST-SAN IS YOUR FRIEND AND APPRENTICE.

AH HA HA! あはは～

HE DID, HE DID.

HE DID SAY THAT

OH, YEAH.

SOUNDS LIKE HE HAD A TERRIBLE PERSONALITY ...

UM... DO YOU NEED SOME-THING?

HE'D SAY, "EVERYONE BESIDES ME IS STUPID."

FORTUNA WAS A DIS-TASTE-FUL.

HEY!!

EAST-SAN, KOKO-CHAN.

KLAT

SWOOSH

...

AM I GOING TO RELIVE ONE OF MY PAST LIVES AGAIN...?!

URGH!

BESIDES, YOU NEVER PUSHED ME!

I'M NOT INJURED! IT DOESN'T EVEN HURT!

AT LEAST UNTIL YOUR LEG HEALS.

I'LL LET YOU WAIT A LITTLE LONGER BEFORE YOU EXPERIENCE YOUR NEXT PAST LIFE.

..
FORGET IT.

ZIP

I DIDN'T MENTION BREASTS OR LEGS!

WAIT !

AND HER BREASTS AND LEGS.

YOU PRAISED HER SLENDER HIPS.

BUT YOU LIKE KOKO-CHAN, DON'T YOU?

...I DON'T KNOW

?

YOU DON'T GET ALONG?

WHY?

IS THAT WHAT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT AT THE POOL?!

YOU TRIO OF PER-VERTS!!

YOU'RE TERRI-BLE!!

WHAM

...

"OH MY" MY BUTT!

OH, MY.

WAS THAT A BAD THING TO SAY?

BYE L"

RUNE, IF YOU'RE WORRIED HE MIGHT DO SOMETHING WEIRD TO YOU, COME TO ME!

I'M PLENTY SATISFIED JUST PLAYING GAMES ON MY DAYS OFF.

HONESTLY, I DON'T CARE ABOUT ANY OF THOSE

THE SPIRIT CIRCLE, MY HEROIC PAST, AND THE RESULTING CONNECTION

I ALRE-ADY HAVE SOME THING

MAYBE THEY JUST DON'T KNOW YOU'RE A KID SINCE YOU'RE HUGE.

THAT USED BOOKSTORE WILL SELL YOU ADULT BOOKS

AS FAR AS SOME-THING IMPORTANT AND FUN GOES..

IF ONLY I HAD MY OWN PC

I MIGHT BE ABLE TO AFFORD ONE JUST ON MY ALLOWANCE.

SERI-OUSLY ?

I SAW ONE FOR 30 THOUSAND AT AN ELECTRONICS STORE THE OTHER DAY.

.AND BUY A LAPTOP

YEAH ONCE I'M IN HIGH SCHOOL, I'LL GET A JOB. ..

.. BUT THE MOST FUN IS HAVING THESE KINDS OF CONVER-SATIONS WITH JUST THE THREE OF US

I LIKE HANGING OUT WITH NONO AND UMI...

. THIS IS A VALUABLE TIME FOR ME

BUT

WE MAY BE A TRIO OF PERVERTS .

YOU'RE INSEPA-RABLE! YOU THREE ..

HELLO, GOOD AFTER-NOON

IT'S AZUMA-SENSEI.

OH.

HELLO

YEAH, HE'S EASY TO TALK TO.

WE JUST GET ALONG.

DAIKI, YOU SURE DO LIKE HIM

NOW GO ON HOME BEFORE IT GETS TOO LATE.

OKAY.

BOW

... WOULD JUST DISA-PPEAR.

I WISH THE SPIRIT CIRCLE, MY PAST, AND OUR CONNECTION...

I DON'T CARE IF MY LEG DOESN'T HEAL.

I WISH I COULD HAVE A NORMAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ISHIGAMI-SAN

WHAT ...

HUH?

LOOK AT THAT

MASTER, MASTER!

HOPEFULLY I WILL BE CUT DOWN BY SOMEONE WITH TALENT ...

MUMBLE MUMBLE

I'LL TAKE A DIFFERENT ROAD

HE'S AWFULLY DISTINCT TODAY

IT'S A GHOST

ALL I MUST DO IS PREVENT ANYONE FROM PASSING...

MUMBLE

...EVEN IF IT MEANS MY LIFE... EVEN IF IT MEANS MY LIFE ...

MUMBLE MUMBLE

NO, DON'T THINK.

MUMBLE

SHOULD I HAVE TRUSTED HIM WITH THE PRIN-CESS...

WHAAAAT?!

ARE YOU IN TROUBLE?

SHALL I REMOVE THE THINGS STABBING YOU?

HELLO!!

RRGH...

GAAH!

GRAAH!

SLASH

YOU-

YOU SHALL NOT PASS!

WHOOSH

WHOOPS!

!!
CRACK
!!

HE'S COMING THIS WAY!!

ACK!

COULD IT BE ?

WHOA!!

WHOOSH

LET'S FIGHT FAIR AND SQU-ARE!!

...?

WHAP

...

II

POOF...

HE RE-TURNED TO THE LIGHT

THAT IS WHAT THIS WEAPON IS FOR.

I WILL KILL YOUR SOUL AND END THE CYCLE.

DOESN'T THAT MAKE THE SPIRIT CIRCLE REALLY DANGEROUS...?!

DID I JUST...

A WEAPON FOR KILLING SOULS...?

MAS-
TER?

OCTO-
BER.

4

on

II

5

CONGRAT-
ULATIONS
ON YOUR
RECOVERY

...

READY
FOR THE
NEXT ONE?

CIRCLE 4/ FIN

スピリットサークル 魂環

SPIRIT CIRCLE

EAST

イースト

CIRCLE 5
VANN 1

OCTO-
BER
CAME.

MY
INJURY
HEALED.

TIME
PASSES
RELENT-
LESSLY.

I'VE
BEEN
WAIT-
ING ..

FOR
YOUR
LEG TO
HEAL.

READY FOR THE NEXT ONE?

CONGRAT-ULATIONS ON YOUR RECOVERY

3 2 1

...

WHAT?

...

HOLD—

SWISH

HOLD ON!!

BECAUSE I WANT TO.

HURRY UP AND LET ME HIT YOU.

YOU'RE A SADIST!!

I ACTUALLY COULD JUST BRUSH YOU WITH IT.

WELL, YES.

I CAN SEE MY PAST LIFE WHEN YOU HIT ME WITH THAT, RIGHT?

THEN WHY DO YOU HIT ME?

IF I JUST NEED TO TOUCH MYSELF, MAYBE I COULD DO IT MYSELF

BESIDES I DON'T WANT TO PASS OUT UP HERE.

2

ACTUALLY, I'VE GOT ONE OF THOSE, TOO.

A SPIRIT CIRCLE ...?!

BUT HOW...

...!!

DID YOU CALL ME? MASTER!!

I DIDN'T CALL YOU

YES!! I'M RIGHT HERE

FORTUNA HAD RUNE HOLD ONTO IT, APPAR-ENTLY.

THEN USE THAT TO TRACE YOUR HEAD OR YOUR HEART.

...IT'S DIFFI-CULT.

WHILE WISHING TO SEE YOUR PAST LIVES, FOCUS YOUR WILL ON TOUCHING YOUR SPIRIT

...

I SEE.

WAIT!!

AH!

DASH

BYE!

I-I'LL DO IT MY-SELF!

I'LL DO IT TONIGHT BEFORE I GO TO SLEEP AND LET YOU KNOW HOW IT GOES TOMORROW!

OH, IS THAT HOW YOU DO IT? WHAT'S SO HARD ABOUT IT?

MAYBE IT'D BE FASTER FOR ME TO HIT...

FOCU-SING

DON'T LEAVE ME.

MAS-TER.

I'LL KNOW IMMEDI-ATELY.

SURELY YOU DON'T INTEND TO LIE IN YOUR REPORT

ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO DO IT?

WHY?

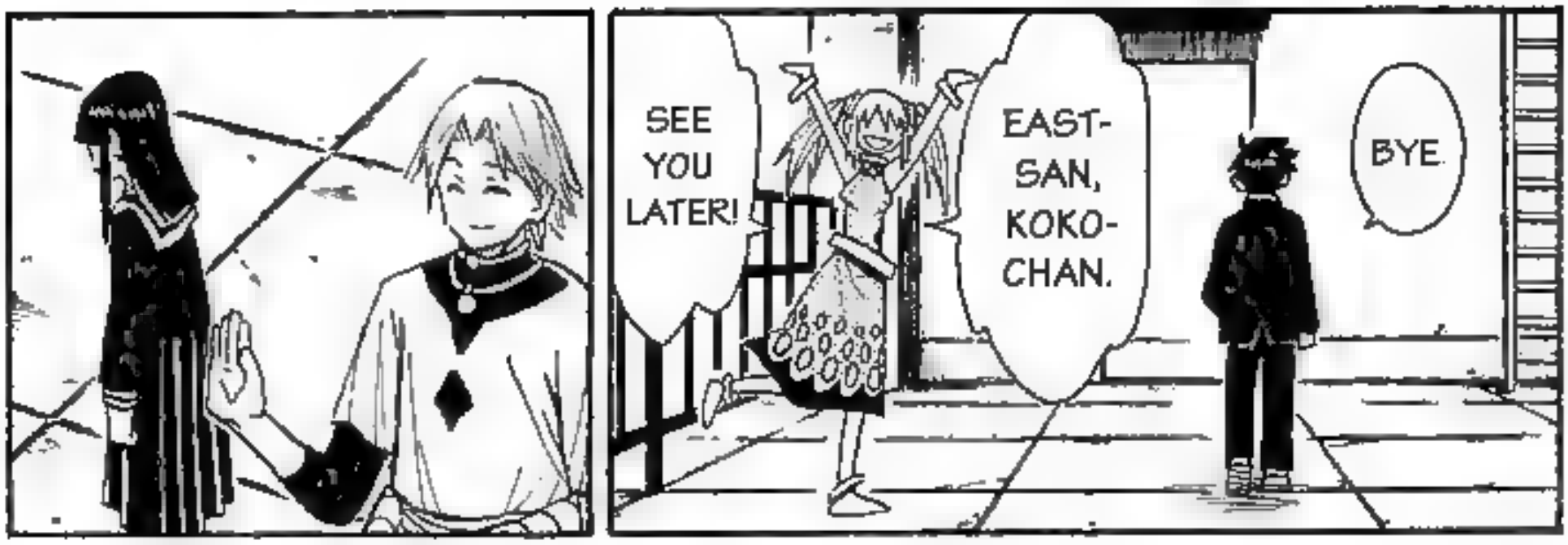
...I THOUGHT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO BE FRIENDS.

IF I SEE THE PAST AND WE TALK ABOUT IT AND COME TO AN UNDER-STANDING...

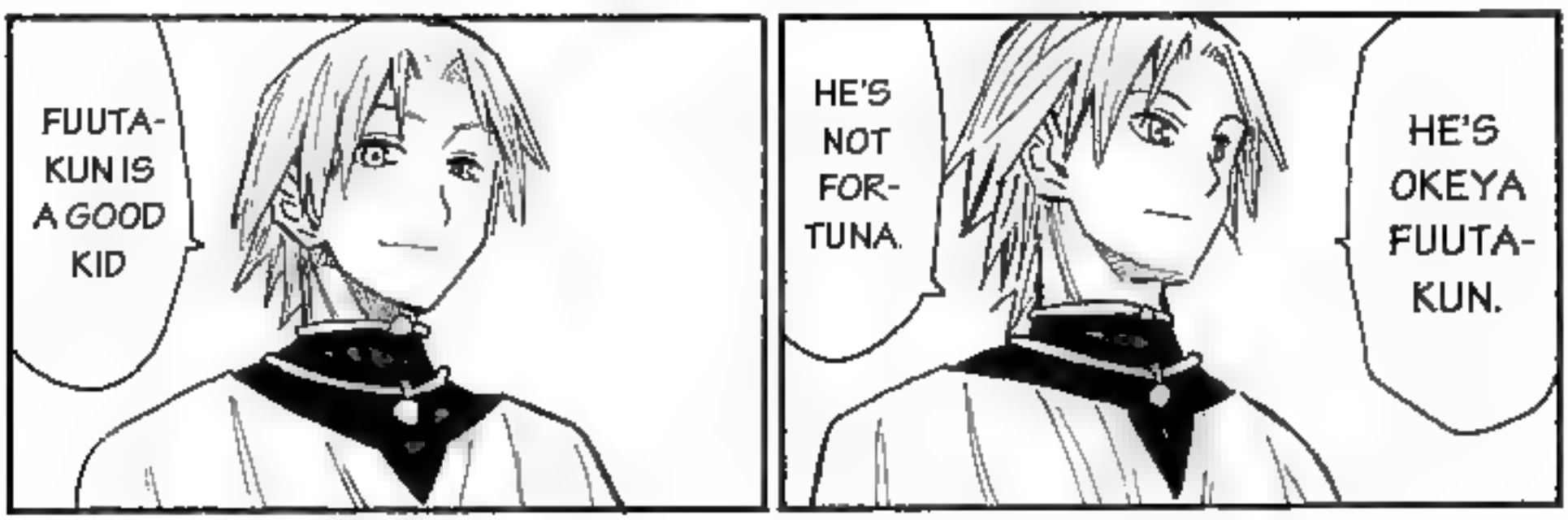
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, AND IT'S PRETTY ROUGH, SO I DON'T WANT TO DO IT, BUT..

I WON'T LIE.

WELL..


SEE YOU LATER!
EAST-SAN, KOKO-CHAN.
BYE.

FORTUNA ...!!
IF UNDERSTANDING WOULD SUFFICE, I WOULDN'T NEED EMOTIONS !!


FUUTA-KUN IS A GOOD KID
HE'S NOT FOR-TUNA.
HE'S OKEYA FUUTA-KUN.

I KNOW

THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT ALL THE MORE UNFOR-GIVABLE ...!!

ALL THE FLOUR ALWAYS GETS BLOWN AWAY BY A SNEEZE!

BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU GRIND FLOUR AT THE MILL...

SOME OF THEM

BE CAREFUL OF THE FLORISTS ON THE STREET CORNERS...

AND THOSE CLOTHES!

....CARRY BULBS BETWEEN THEIR LEGS!

WHAT KIND OF SONG AND DANCE IS THAT?!

IS SHE FREE TO COS-PLAY?

YEAH BUT WHY ARE YOU DRESSED LIKE THAT?

YOU'RE DISTRACT-ING ME. I CAN'T FOCUS.

YEAH, SO I NEED YOU TO BE QUIET.

IS IT NOT GOING WELL?

YOUR PAST LIVES, I MEAN.

I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T WANT TO SEE THEM.

...TO RAISE YOUR SPIRITS.

IT'S A SONG AND DANCE...

ISN'T IT GREAT?

...

YOU'RE PROBABLY SUBCONSCIOUSLY STOPPING YOURSELF

2

ALLOW ME!!

HERE.

YOINK

WAIT A...

WHAT?

THEN.

SEE YOU-...

I'M NOT READY FOR...

OKAY,

YOU CAN DO IT, MASTER.

YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH KOKO-CHAN AND BECOME FRIENDS, RIGHT?

YEAH

LATER !!

CLANG

GOOD BYE.

BE CARE-FUL!

ROAR

?!

FOR-
TU...

WHUD

<h>

HAH

YOU'VE GOT STRONG NERVES TO SLEEP ON YOUR HORSE.

NOT AT ALL...

WHAT'S UP, VANN?

..WHAT'S GOING ON?

HUH?

UM ..

A WITCH, HUH .. SHE MUST HAVE DEMONS ATTENDING HER.

IF SHE USES HER MAGIC AGAINST US..

THE HOME OF OUR TARGET, "THE BLACK-HAIRED WITCH," IS CLOSE.

WE'LL BE WALKING FROM HERE, VANN.

YES, SIR.

.. SUBJUGATE THE WITCH MYSELF?

E-EXCUSE ME.. COULD I

THAT'S SUPER-STITION.

DENYING THE EXISTENCE OF DEMONS IS THE SAME AS DENYING THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

WATCH YOUR MOUTH, PHILISTINE.

YES, SIR. I'LL BE CAREFUL IN THE FUTURE, CAPTAIN

YOU'LL BE THE ONE TO KILL HER!!

WELL SAID, VANN!!

WELL ...

HA HA!! GREEN-HORN!

ARE YOU SO DESPERATE TO DISTINGUISH YOURSELF?

THANK YOU!!

BOW

QUI-ET.

CAPTAIN, THIS IS HIS FIRST BATTLE...

!

NOT YET.

HAVE YOU EVER KILLED SOME-ONE?

.. VANN

I FOUND IT!! IT'S THE WITCH'S LAIR!!

JUST MAKE SURE YOU TEND IT CAREFULLY

NO... IF YOU HAVE EVEN A SLIVER OF FAITH, THAT'S FINE.

!!

YES, SIR.

SHE MAY BE MY OPPONENT, BUT SHE IS STILL HUMAN.

UM... SHE MAY NOT BE A KNIGHT, BUT SHOULDN'T I STILL RESPECT HER AS A HUMAN...

...I'M SORRY FOR TALKING BACK.

THINK OF YOUR OPPONENT AS AN OBJECT.

DON'T LOOK THEM IN THE EYES. IF YOU DO, PLACE THE MEMORY HIGH UP ON A SHELF IN YOUR HEART.

...

I'LL BE BACK.

YES, SIR.

H A H.

W H E W

B-BE CAREFUL OF HER MAGIC

DON'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN.

CLANK

CHAPTER THREE

"VANN"

. .AS THE ELDEST SON OF A NOBLE FAMILY, HAVE A RESPON-SIBILITY TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE

AND I...

SINCE I WAS LITTLE, I WANTED TO BECOME A KNIGHT,

A PROTECTOR OF THE PEOPLE AND OF ORDER.

I WILL DEFEAT THOSE WHO MISGUIDE THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE AND DISRUPT ORDER.

THAT IS WHY I VOLUNTEERED TO TAKE PART IN THE SUBJUGATION OF A WITCH

I WANT TO KNOW I PROTECTED THE PEOPLE.

I DON'T WANT TO DISTINGUISH MYSELF IN BATTLE.

SHLINK

WHO IS IT?

!

CREAK...

NOW I WILL FULFILL MY DUTY ..!!

I AM FINALLY THE KNIGHT I WANTED TO BECOME

...A KNIGHT ...?

SHE IS...

.THAT'S RIGHT SHE'S ..

"SHE'S AN ENEMY!! KILL HER QUICKLY!!"

"IF YOU DON'T HURRY, THE ONES YOU LOVE WILL BE KILLED."

ONE LOOK AT HER, AND SOMETHING DEEP INSIDE ME SCREAMED.

WHY? I...

SUB-JUGATE ME?

QUIET!! I WON'T LISTEN TO YOUR DECEIT!!

I AM THE KNIGHT COME TO SUBJUGATE YOU, BLACK-HAIRED WITCH!!

ON YOUR GUARD !!

CLANK

MY NAME IS VANN FLANTYR!!

BAM

BAM

CRASH

CLATTER

CLATTER

CLATTER

BANG

IT'S BEGUN ...

...

VANN ...!!

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

DIE!!

DIE!!

COUGH

URGH... YOU'VE DONE IT NOW..

YOU WITCH !!

THE MEDICINE ..FOR THE VILLAGE WAS ALMOST

..FINI-SHED... BUT...

FOUL DEMON !!

DIE!!

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

I WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOU..!!

HISSS

CLUTCH

I WILL NOT FOR-GIVE YOU..

HISSS

WHUD

NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU ARE REBORN, MAY YOU BE CURSED!!

MAY THIS BE ETCHED INTO YOUR SOUL!!

MAY YOUR LIFE BE TAINTED!!

ガシャ CLANK

J'O~ WOBBLE

SOME-ONE'S COMING OUT.

...!

I-IT'S GONE QUIET.

IF YOU MEET THEIR GAZE, THEY'LL DIG A WELL IN YOU...

BE CAREFUL OF MEN DOWSING ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD..

"D... WOBBLE...

I THOUGHT IT WOULD CALM ME...

OH THE GARDENER AT MY ESTATE SINGS THIS SONG OFTEN.

YES, SIR

UM...

YOUR ESTATE? OH, THE FLANTYR ESTATE.

WELL, YOU SHOULD GO HOME AND REST

BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU GRIND FLOUR AT THE MILL...

HEY!! KEEP IT TOGE-THER.

ALL THE FLOUR ...

WHAT ARE YOU SINGING?

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FACE? ARE YOU BURNED?

VAN!! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

W-WELL DONE!!

I-IS THAT HER HEAD?!

GASP!!

YOU GET USED TO IT

...

WHEW

.. YEAH

KILLING PEOPLE.

IT'S TIRING, ISN'T IT.?

MY CHILDHOOD DREAM SHONE BEFORE ME.

I BECAME A KNIGHT.

I'M DIS-OWNING YOU

VANN

MY SON

THE ROAD AHEAD WAS LONG.

YOUR YOUNGER BROTHER WITH INHERIT THE ESTATE.

A MAN TAINTED BY A WITCH CANNOT BE A PART OF THE FLANTYR HOUSE.

MY LIFE WAS CURSED.

CIRCLE 5/ FIN

CIRCLE 6
VANN 2

I HEARD YOU WERE KICKED OUT OF YOUR HOME.

...HEY, VANN.

THE KNIGHT'S ORDER SAID THE SAME.

THEY SAID SOMEONE CURSED BY A WITCH COULDN'T BE PART OFTHE FLANTYR HOUSE..

YES... BECAUSE OF THIS SCAR...

THANK YOU.

JINGLE

A PARTING GIFT..

YOUR FATHER GAVE THIS TO ME. SPEND IT FRUGALLY, AND IT'LL LAST YOU 20 YEARS.

TAKE THIS.

...I SEE.

IF YOU'RE EVER IN TROUBLE, YOU CAN COME TO ME.

...BUT, WELL, I THINK OF YOU AS A RELATIVE.

I WOULDN'T SAY I THINK OF YOU AS A SON...

...I'VE KNOWN YOUR FATHER A LONG TIME.

THE CAPTAIN WILL CALL ME A PHILISTINE AGAIN.

HAはは HA HA

MAYBE WE WERE FAMILY IN A PAST LIFE.

THE CHURCH SAYS THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS REINCAR-NATION.

I THOUGHT OF YOU AS AN UNCLE.

...SO DO I.

..I THOUGHT.. I'D HEAD TOWARD THE OCEAN.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

WELL, THEN...

HA HA.

BOW

ZAAASH

ザーン…

I SPENT THE REST OF MY TIME TRAINING SO MY SWORD ARM WOULDN'T RUST.

AND I DRANK

THE OCEAN'S AMAZING NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES..

..I SEE IT

I LIVED OFF FISH FROM THE OCEAN AND RABBITS FROM THE FOREST.

..I FOUND A PLACE TO LIVE AT THE END OF A PENIN-SULA.

AFTER HALF A YEAR OF WANDER-ING .

THE TOWNS-FOLK FOUND ME CREEPY.

I HAD NO WAY TO SPEND THE MONEY I'D GOTTEN EXCEPT ON DRINK.

HIDING THE SCAR ON MY FACE, I WRAPPED MYSELF IN BANDAGES AND SOMETIMES HEADED INTO TOWN.

I WONDER WHY?

I JUST CAN'T THINK THAT WAY.

NO

SHOULDN'T PROUDLY SHOW IT?

I EARNED THIS SCAR OF HONOR FIGHTING AN EVIL WITCH.

NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU ARE REBORN, MAY YOU BE CURSED!!

MAY YOUR LIFE BE TAINTED!!

DAMN WITCH !!

IT'S ALL!! BECAUSE OF HER!!

HER!!

BECAUSE OF HER!!

IT'S HER FAULT!

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

DRAG DRAG

HUFF HUFF

MY BROTHER TOOK OVER THE ESTATE.

AFTER A FEW YEARS, RUMORS OF MY FATHER'S DEATH SPREAD AROUND TOWN.

I'LL OPEN A SECOND SHOP, THEN.

OH, THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.

NO, I'LL RUN THE SHOP.

BUT YOU'RE THE SECOND SON

IS THAT RIGHT? GROW UP STRONG AND HELP OUT YOUR OLDER BROTHER.

I'LL TAKE OVER YOUR SHOP, DAD.

IN THE BAND-AGES.

YOU, THERE.

!

FATHER

...WHAT?

SORRY, BUT YOU'RE GOING TO DIE HERE.

YOU'RE VANN FLANTYR, AREN'T YOU?

WHUNK

WHACK

H...

AN ASSAS-SIN?!

I'M GLAD I KEPT UP MY TRAINING ...!!

CLOSE

WHOA .. !!

CLANK

CLANG

CLANG

CRACK

YOU'RE A DECENT SWORDSMAN FOR AN ASSASSIN...

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

I HEARD YOU WEREN'T A KNIGHT ANY-MORE.

NOT BAD ...!!

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HOW MUCH DID HE PAY YOU?

THE ONE WHO HIRED YOU TO KILL ME.

. MY BROTHER.. IT WAS THE CURRENT HEAD OF HOUSE FLANTYR, WASN'T IT?

WHY DON'T YOU BECOME MY BODY-GUARD?

I'VE GOT PLENTY OF MONEY

TELL ME.

I'LL PAY A LITTLE MORE.

I CAN'T TELL YOU THAT.

HUH?

OH

OR...

WHAT?

. UNTIL ONE OF US DIES?

WHEW

...WOULD YOU RATHER KEEP GOING...

HA.

YOU'RE SO WEIRD

OKAY.

STARTING TODAY, I'LL BE YOUR KNIGHT.

WHEW

WHO HIRES A GUY SENT TO KILL YOU?

YOU DON'T GET TO DUB YOURSELF A KNIGHT LIKE THAT

MILORD THE NAME'S STIHL. NICE TOO MEET YOU...

MY YOUNGER BROTHER HIRED HIM TO KILL ME.

AFTER A FEW DRINKS, STIHL TOLD ME EVERYTHING HE KNEW.

I MAY HAVE BEEN DISOWNED.... . BUT AS LONG AS I COULD SPEAK, HE COULDN'T RELAX (WHO KNOWS WHAT KINDS OF RUMORS I WOULD SPREAD ABOUT HIM?)

. .OR SOME-THING LIKE THAT.

HE DIDN'T LIKE HAVING ME AROUND WHILE HE WAS SET TO INHERIT THE ESTATE

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

...IT CAME TO MIND, SO I SANG.

HA HA HA!

WHAT SONG IS THAT?

SOME OF THEM CARRY BULBS BETWEEN THEIR LEGS.

BE CARE-FUL THE FLORISTS ON THE STREET CORNERS

.. BUT STIHL AND I FOUGHT THEM OFF.

THEY CAME TIME AND TIME AGAIN...

AT MOST, IT WOULD BE THREE

MY CHEAP BROTHER WOULD ONLY HIRE ONE OR TWO ASSASSINS AT A TIME.

AND SWUNG SWORDS

...ATE RABBIT AND FISH...

ASIDE FROM THAT, WE DRANK

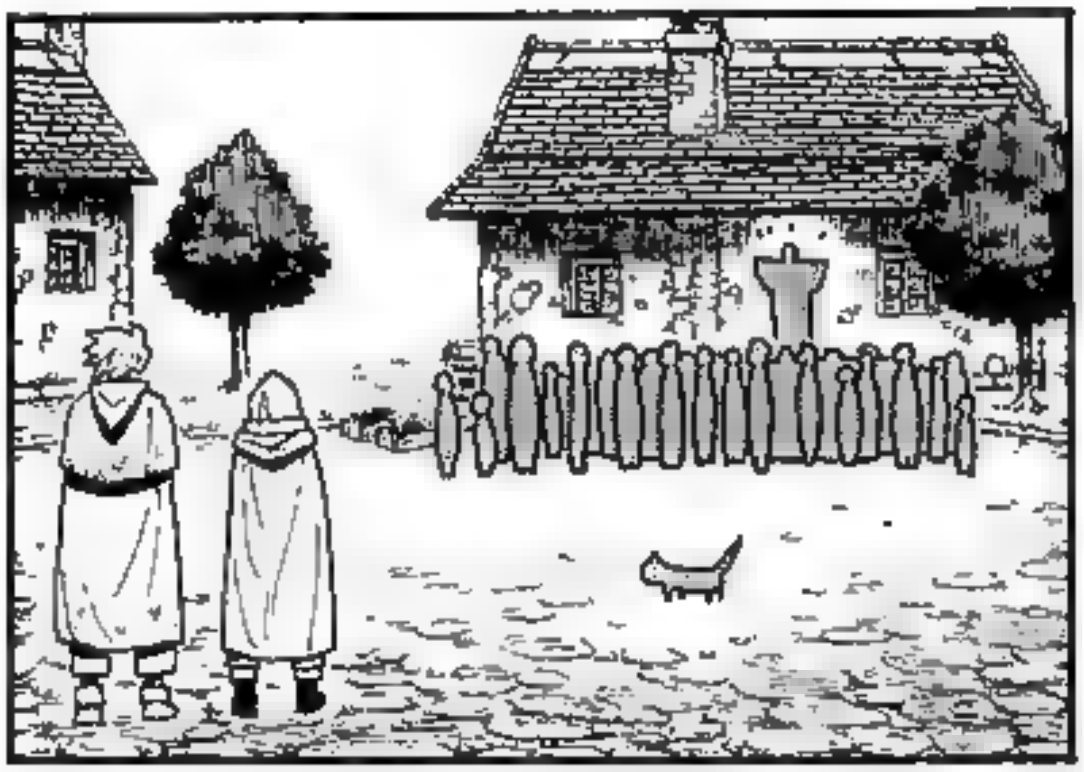
YOU DRINK TOO MUCH, IDIOT.

MILORD, WE'RE OUT OF LIQUOR. LET'S GO TO TOWN.

DRIP

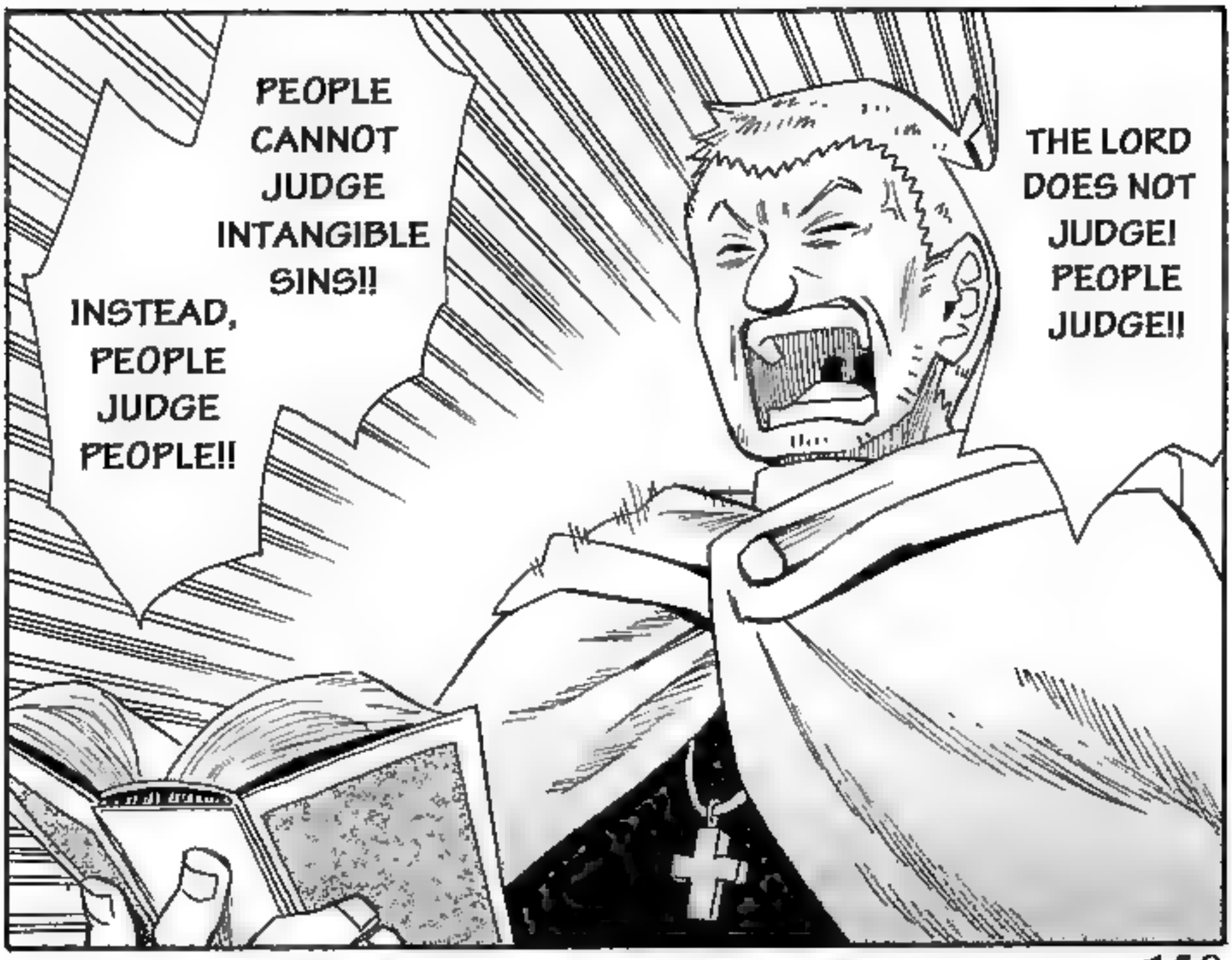
..MY LIFE HAD EXCITE-MENT.

THANKS TO STIHL THE ASSASSIN



...LOOKS LIKE AN OUTDOOR SERMON.
OH!
THERE'S A CROWD. WHAT'S GOING ON?

AW, DON'T BE LIKE THAT, MILORD.
PAY FOR YOUR LIQUOR WITH YOUR OWN MONEY


PEOPLE CANNOT JUDGE INTANGIBLE SINS!!
INSTEAD, PEOPLE JUDGE PEOPLE!!
THE LORD DOES NOT JUDGE! PEOPLE JUDGE!!

SHUT UP AND LISTEN, FOOLS!!

SHUT UP!!

THE CHURCH IS A DEN OF EVIL!!

THIS ARRO-GANCE IS THE TRUE SIN!!

ARE YOU SURE YOU SHOULD BE SAYING THAT?!

YOU'RE ARRO-GANTLY JUDGING US, TOO!!

DUMBFOUNDED

ぽかーん

TELL THE CHURCH!!

DRAG HIM DOWN!

HOW DARE YOU CALL US FOOLS!!

TREAT YOUR BODIES AS CHURCHES AND YOUR HEARTS AS YOUR GODS!!

PEO-PLE!!

YIKES!! THE PRIEST?!

MOVE, MOVE!!

ドドドド

RUMBLE

A CHILD?

...HUH?

WHAT A CRUDE CLERGY-MAN...

WILL HE BE OKAY?

THAT PRIEST WAS CRITICIZING THE CHURCH.

TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
SCREECH
WHOA
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
DASH
DASH
WHOA!
RUMBLE
WHERE'D THAT FILTHY PRIEST GO?!
? HEY, ARE YOU OKAY?
WHUD
RUMBLE
HE WENT THAT WAY!
WAAAH. THE WEIRD MAN PUSHED ME DOWN AND WENT THAT WAY.
HEY, KID!! DID A WEIRD GUY COME THIS WAY?!

HE'S USING A KID WOW

WHAT? ARE THEY WORKING TOGETHER?

DASH

BOW

HUP!

HIDE ME HERE FOR A WHILE.

I ONLY JUST SAW YOU.

HUH? IS THIS WHERE YOU GUYS LIVE?

!

OH? NEW ASSAS-SINS ?

THERE'S SOMEONE IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE.

WHO WOULD IGNORE THE REQUEST OF A PRIEST?

AS A FORMER KNIGHT, I CANNOT IGNORE A MAN PURSUED BY GREAT NUMBERS.

I'LL PAY.

YOU SEEM LIKE TROUBLE.

AND YOU'RE A HACK.

NO. LEAVE.

YOU'RE BIG AND IN THE WAY

I'M HIS DISCIPLE CIELO.

NICE TO MEET YOU.

I AM THE (UN-ORDAINED) WANDERING PREACHER GLASS.

I STOLE IT FROM A CHURCH.

BAM

OH, THIS?

YOU'VE GOT A BIBLE, DON'T YOU?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, UN-ORDAINED?

I SAW YOU HOLDING ONE IN TOWN.

YOU'RE TOO MUCH TROUBLE!! JUST LEAVE!!

IT'S THE CHURCH !!

IT'S NOT THE VILLAGERS THAT ARE AFTER ME.

HA HA HA!! SERIOUSLY ?!

I LOVE ALL THOSE THINGS.

DON'T WORRY.

HAW HAW HAW HAW HAW

DON'T BE LIKE THAT!! I WON'T STAY LONG.

BESIDES, WE DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO FEED A PRIEST! ALL WE HAVE IS MEAT AND FISH!!

. DIDN'T LEAVE THE NEXT DAY OR THE NEXT MONTH.

AND THUS

THE MAN WHO SAID HE WOULDN'T STAY LONG .

YOU'RE A COMMON SCOUN-DREL!

HA HA HA!

HA HA HA! THIS GUY IS HILARIOUS!!

SEVERAL YEARS PASSED

BUT THOSE ARE ALL THINGS PEOPLE HAVE DONE.

NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE ANY ASSASSINS CAME

ON TOP OF THAT, I'VE GOT ASSASSINS. I'M CURSED OUT THE ASS.

I WAS DISOWNED BY MY FAMILY AND GOT KICKED OUT OF THE ORDER OF KNIGHTS.

FORTUNATELY NO PURSUERS CAME FROM THE CHURCH.

A WITCH'S CURSE? THAT'S SUPERSTITION

NOTH-ING'S HAP-PENING TO YOU RIGHT NOW.

BUT MILORD, WHEN HE TRIPPED AND SPILLED HIS LAST DRINK THE OTHER DAY...

...HE SAID, "OH, MY GOD."

WE SPENT OUR DAYS DRUNK.

YOU REALLY DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD, DO YOU?

YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS MIRACLES OR MAGIC.

RIGHT? EVIL COMES FROM THE FLESH AND BLOOD OF MAN.

DON'T DRINK TOO MUCH.

THE FISH SOUP IS READY.

ONLY CIELO DIDN'T DRINK.

CLANG CLANG

SURE, SURE.

THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL DIVINE PUNISHMENT

SEE? MY FAITH RUNS DEEP.

HA HA HA!

OUR DAYS WERE DEPRAVED AND LIVELY.

THE FOUR OF US LIVED TOGETHER FOR QUITE A WHILE.

HE WAS A HOPELESS RUFFIAN.

.. BUT HE STAYED AND DRANK.

THE ASSASSINS STOPPED COMING, AND I F NISHED PAYING HIM

HE WAS A SHAME-LESS MAN WHO'D BETRAY YOU FOR MONEY

..I HATED THE MAN NAMED STIHL.

THE HOUSE BECAME A LITTLE QUIETER.

ONE DAY WHILE DRUNK IN TOWN, HE GOT IN A FIGHT AND DIED

I WAS SICK OF HEARING HIS COM-PLAINTS ABOUT THE CHURCH

IT WAS ANNOYING THAT HE'D SOMETIMES START PREACHING FROM HIS STOLEN BIBLE.

HE WAS A VIOLENT AND HEAVY DRINKER FOR A PRIEST.

...I HATED THE MAN NAMED GLASS.

I HATED THE MAN NAMED CIELO.

THE HOUSE BECAME QUIETER.

ONE DAY WHILE DRUNK HE FELL DOWN A WELL AND DIED.

COMPARED TO H M, THE THREE OF US WERE A BUNCH OF HOOLIGANS

HE DID ALL THE CHORES AROUND THE HOUSE.

HE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO DIDN'T DRINK, AND SPENT ALL HIS FREE TIME READING THE BIBLE

I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE THANKING YOU, MORON

AND HEADED OFF HOME WITH GLASS' REMAINS

AFTER THE DEATH OF GLASS, HE THANKED ME FOR ALL 'D DONE.

IF YOUR DAUGHTER GETS LOST HE'LL TAKE HER VIRTUE.

BE CAREFUL OF THE HUNTER DEEP IN THE FOREST..

HUFF

WITH EVERYONE I HATED GONE, FELT REFRESHED

SLAM

BOY, IT'S COLD.

FIRE-WOOD, FIRE-WOOD.

CREAK

...

WHAT?

WAAAHI

WAAAHI

CIRCLE 6/ FIN

CIRCLE 7
VANN 3

WAA-
AH!

WAA-
AH!

WHY?

WHA-

WAH
WAH!

OH,
COME
ON.

WAAAH
WAAAH!

I SEE
I DON'T
UNDER-
STAND

WHAT?
WAH?

WAAAH
WAAAH!

STOP CRYING. I'M TAKING YOU TO A CHURCH RIGHT NOW

GOT IT?

WA-AH! WA-AH!

WHAT CLUMSY PERSON LEFT YOU HERE?

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS. WHY ME?

YOU SHOULD ABANDON YOUR KIDS AT A CHURCH.

WAAAH! WAAAH!

. THEN YOU SHOULD CONVINCE HER TO LEAVE.

...IF YOU DID NOT INVITE HER...

THEN YOU WILL HAVE TO TEACH HER.

THERE'S NO WAY SHE'D UNDER-STAND WORDS.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

WHAT?

YOU SHOULD CARE FOR YOUR OWN GUESTS.

SHE'S NOT MY GUEST, THOUGH.

WHAT?

WAH WAH WAH WAH

WAAAH ...

ARE YOU TELLING ME TO RAISE HER?

WHAT?

THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN SAYING.

WA-AAH!

WA-AAH!

...

SERI-OUSLY?

SLAM

PONK

I'LL GIVE YOU SOME BREAD. NOW LEAVE.

AAAH!

SIGH

I'LL WORK YOU HARD ONCE YOU'RE BIGGER.

YOU'RE MY KID NOW

SORRY ABOUT THAT

REI...?

AND WHAT ARE YOU SMILING ABOUT?

YOU WERE CRYING UNTIL A SECOND AGO.

WAIT, WHO'S REI?

HEE!

EEE!

THAT'S OKAY, RIGHT?

...HUH? WHAT? WHY...

WELL, I GUESS YOUR NAME'S REI, THEN

EEE!

SQU-
EE!

WHAT?

REI
..

IS MY FACE THAT FUNNY?

WHY AM I CRYING NOW...?

I

THEY FOUND A MAN WRAPPED IN BANDAGES AND STINKING OF LIQUOR CREEPY, BUT I DESPERATELY PLEADED WITH THEM UNTIL THEY ACCEPTED ME

I THOUGHT I'D RAISE REI WITH GOAT'S MILK FROM FARMERS OUTSIDE TOWN.

...AND LEARNED TO RAISE A CHILD.

I HELPED ON THE FARM...

...EVERY DAY WAS LIKE A STORM.

UNTIL REI STOPPED CRYING AT NIGHT

THEY TOOK SUCH GOOD CARE OF ME, I WISH I COULD HAVE BEEN PART OF THEIR FAMILY

HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN...?

FIVE YEARS PASSED

THREE YEARS PASSED

I LIED.

SHE DIED OF AN ILLNESS

WHERE'S MOM?

DAD.

THE LIE BROUGHT MORE LIES.

I SEE.

FAR AWAY.

WHERE'S THE GRAVE?

I WAS A NOBLEMAN. PEOPLE OPPOSED OUR RELATIONSHIP BECAUSE OF THE DISTANCE IN OUR SOCIAL STATUS.

...BUT WE ELOPED.

YOUR MOTHER WAS BEAUTIFUL, BUT A COMMONER.

HOW WONDER-FUL!!

YOU ELOPED?

WAS MOM OKAY AFTER BEING KIDNAPPED BY THE GIANT?

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS GLASS AND STIHL AFTER YOU ENTERED THE OLD CASTLE?

HEY, WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT?!

THEY ALL THANKED ME PROFUSELY

THEY WERE FINE, OF COURSE. I OPENED THE SNAKE'S STOMACH AND SAVED THEM.

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE WHO WERE EATEN?

JUST THEN!! MY DOUBLE SWORD STYLE'S 16-CUT STRIKE SLICED THE MOUNTAINOUS SNAKE INTO PIECES!!

AMAZ-ING!!

AT SOME POINT. . ...I HAD QUIT DRINK-ING.

.. BECAME MY ONLY SOURCE OF HAPPI-NESS

AT SOME POINT, REI'S SMILE...

WHO DRAGGED ME FROM THE KNIGHT'S PATH

I SPENT MANY YEARS HATING THE CURSED WITCH...

I WANTED TO BECOME A KNIGHT WITH THE POWER TO PROTECT

I WANTED TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE

AS LONG AS I HAVE REI.

I DON'T CARE ANY-MORE

HOW-EVER

I DON'T NEED IT ANYMORE.

WHAT? YOUR SWORD...

I'M GETTING OLD

I WON'T BE ABLE TO PRO-TECT HER FOREVER

IN ORDER FOR THIS GIRL TO BE HAPPY

THESE CLOTHES ARE SO UNUSUAL!

THANKS, DAD!!

I SOLD MY SWORD, THOUGH.

I BOUGHT THEM FROM A PEDDLER.

I NEARLY GAVE UP SO MANY TIMES

THAT'S ENOUGH YOU HELPED US, TOO.

I'D NEVER HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RAISE A CHILD MYSELF...

YOU'VE DONE MORE FOR ME THAN YOU KNOW

BOW

YOU'RE GOING TO LOOK FOR A HUSBAND?!

WHAT?

...BUT I'VE BEEN WANTING TO TRAVEL.

OH

I DON'T CARE MUCH ABOUT A HUS-BAND...

BEING DRAGGED ALONG BY YOUR FATHER'S STRANGE IDEAS...

PANT PANT

ANYWAY, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS, REI?

I'VE NEVER BEEN SO GRATEFUL TO ANYONE.

TAKE CARE.

THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING.

YOU, TOO.

REI, HAVE YOU ALWAYS LIKED WALKING SO MUCH?

YEAH, I LOVE IT.

WHAT A LONG ROAD, DAD.

I CAN WALK AS MUCH AS I WANT!

JUST LISTEN.

? WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?

I HAD A DREAM ONCE.

I HAD SO MUCH FUN, I WALKED ABOVE THE CLOUDS.

WHEN I WORE THEM, I COULD WALK ON AIR.

IN MY DREAM, I RECEIVED A PAIR OF SANDALS FROM A BOY

HE POINTED AT A MAN AND SAID THIS.

GOD WAS THERE ABOVE THE CLOUDS

BUT ONCE I WALKED THERE...

...I WOKE UP.

THAT BOY IS SAD.

GO TO HIM.

I FEEL LIKE SOMEWHERE OUT THERE I CAN FIND THAT BOY AND MY HAPPINESS.

THAT'S WHY I WANT TO WALK EVEN MORE.

I MUST HAVE BEEN MOVED TO TEARS.

...

NOTH-ING.

WHAT'S WRONG?

SNIFFLE

I RAISED BY DAUGHTER ON LIES. I'M AMAZED SHE TURNED OUT SO WELL.

I DON'T KNOW WHY.

AT SOME POINT I STARTED CRYING.

FORTU-
NATELY,
I DID
HAVE
SOME
IDEA OF
WHERE
TO LOOK

I HAD TO
FIND A MAN
GOOD
ENOUGH
FOR REI
BEFORE I
RAN OUT OF
STRENGTH

OUR
JOURNEY
WAS
LONG.
IT WAS
HARD ON
MY OLD
BODY.

HUH?

HEY, YOUNG
MAN. HOW
DID THIS
PLACE END
UP LIKE THIS?

ぎゃ、

JOLT

SERI-
OUSLY?
IT'S IN
RUINS?

WE PASSED
THROUGH
MY HOME-
TOWN
ON OUR
WAY THERE

MY GRANDFATHER
WHO WAS THE
GARDENER HERE
SAID IT HAPPENED
JUST BEFORE I WAS
BORN.

えええ WHAT?!

WH-
WHEN
DID THAT
HAPPEN?!

THE MASTER OF
THE HOUSE WENT
CRAZY AND SET
IT ON FIRE AFTER
HE HIT HIS HEAD
FALLING FROM A
HORSE.

HE'S
COVERED
IN BAND-
AGES...

OH,
HOUSE
FLANTYR?

I SEE...

NO..
I JUST KNEW
SOMEONE
WHO LIVED
HERE...

.. DO YOU HAVE
SOMETHING
TO DO WITH
THIS PLACE?

ABOUT ..
20 YEARS AGO?
THAT'S AROUND THE
TIME THE ASSASSINS
STOPPED COMING.

YOU REALLY WERE A NOBLEMAN.

WAS THIS YOUR HOME?

LET'S GO, REI

.. WITH A GRAIN OF SALT

TAKE WHAT PRIESTS AND KINGS SAY ..

BYE.

REAL-LY?

HEH HEH!

THIS PLACE IS IRRELE-VANT, THOUGH.

I-IT'S ALL TRUE.

HON-ESTLY

SH-SHUT UP

THAT'S THE SONG YOU SING SOMETIMES.

THAT MAN'S SONG

AN OLD FRIEND'S HOME.

SERVES HIM RIGHT

HEE HEE

MY STUPID BROTHER FELL, HIT HIS HEAD, AND RUINED HIMSELF

THAT'S WHAT HE GETS FOR PLOTTING TO KILL HIS OWN SIBLING.

HUH?

BY THE WAY, WHERE ARE WE HEADED NOW?

HONESTLY, I WAS OVER-FLOWING WITH LAUGHTER THAT NIGHT

...HE'S A GOOD GUY.

WHY DID YOU HESI-TATE?

J

THERE SHOULD BE A TRUSTWORTHY MAN BY THE NAME OF CIELO THERE.

HE'S A LITTLE OLDER THAN YOU, BUT...

I HEARD IT'S TOWARDS THOSE MOUNTAINS OVER THERE.

REALLY?! IS HE HAND-SOME?

SEVERAL DAYS LATER NEAR A VILLAGE ON THE PLAINS.

URGH...

WHEW

...I THINK THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY.

WHAT GOES AROUND, COMES AROUND.

IT MORE THAN HURT. MY HEAD WAS ON FIRE.

...I TRIPPED AND HIT MY HEAD.

HEY, YOU KIDS!!

GO GET AN ADULT!! SOMEONE'S HURT!!

DAD!!

DAD?!

SO WARM...

I BLED, TOO.

ひゃ!

DRIBBLE...

SORRY, REI

I WON'T MAKE IT.

HAH. GUESS THERE IS A GOD.

I CAN'T BELIEVE MY LIFE IS ENDING JUST LIKE MY BROTHER, WHO I MOCKED THE OTHER DAY

HUH? WAS I SINGING? NO, I WASN'T SINGING.

DADII DAD, HANG IN THERE!!

THIS ISN'T THE TIME FOR WEIRD SONGS!!

BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU GRIND FLOUR AT THE MILL..

DON'T CRY YOUR SMILE IS MY REASON FOR LIVING...

I HAD GROWN SO USED TO KILLING.

I KILLED ASSASSINS WHO HAD COME TO KILL ME...

I KILLED A WITCH WHO CURSED ME, AND I RESENTED HER.

BUT .

DESERVE SUCH HAPPINESS?

HOW CAN SUCH A HOPELESS MAN...

I SPENT MY DAYS ON DRINK, COMPLAINTS, AND GRUDGES.

FIND HAPPI-NESS ON YOUR OWN...

I ABAN-DONED HER IN THE MIDDLE OF OUR JOURNEY.

UNABLE TO SEE MY LITTLE GIRL BECOME A BRIDE.

I'M GOING FIRST THIS TIME

I'M SORRY, REI

THANK YOU...

...FOR WALKING THIS FAR.

I LOVE YOU.

DAD!!

DOCTOR CIELO, OVER HERE!! HURRY!

DID YOU HAVE A NICE DREAM?!

GOOD MORNING, MASTER!!

TODAY'S BREAKFAST SEEMS TO BE FISH. IT LOOKS DELICIOUS.

...HUH...? NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, RUNE'S SONG AND CLOTHES YESTERDAY ...?

IT WAS DEFINITELY A LONG ONE, THOUGH...

I SEE.

...I DON'T KNOW.

HEY.

MORNING, FUUTA.

NO, I OVERSLEPT AND WAS SPACING OUT.

YOUR EYES ARE RED. WERE YOU UP ALL NIGHT?

WHY DID YOU HESI-TATE?

DAIKI, TETSU.

HEY.

HOW DID HE DIE?

SO?

WHAT...?

THE KNIGHT WHO KILLED THE *APOTHECARY* MAKING A MEDICINE FOR THE VILLAGE'S EPIDEMIC?

CIRCLE 7/FIN